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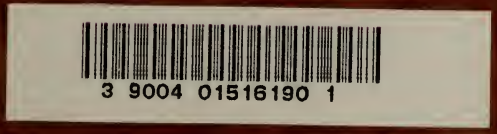

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IMPERIAL FEDERATION LEAGUE IN CANADA.

Canada and the Canadian Question

A REVIEW

BY

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Canada and the Canadian Question*

CANADIAN readers must put this book down, after reading it from cover to cover, with very mingled feelings. If possessed of the slightest appreciation of classical culture, they have read the author's "Bay Leaves" over and over again, always admiring without stint, and wishing that the great Oxford scholar had accepted the Mastership of his College and given us more work of the same kind. If they understand anything of the moral forces which have made Britain what she is, they are thankful to him for an appreciation of Oliver Cromwell as true as Carlyle's. If in sympathy with either the critical, the historical, the social or the democratic movement of modern times, they are continually astonished at his varied and rapid insight. Above all, they are grateful to such a man for having cast in his lot with Canada, for having done his best to purify journalism and political life and to awaken the people—sometimes with the lash and often with the stings of the gad-fly—out of party slavery and intellectual torpor. All this tribute they can pay him ungrudgingly, and at the same time feel that he is ignorant of the deepest feelings of Canadians. They are obliged to admit, to those with whom his name is as a red rag to a bull, that he is recommending a course which they never intend to take, because it would be inconsistent with honour, as well as fatal to their highest hopes and to true

* By Goldwin Smith, D.C.L. Toronto: Hunter, Rose and Company, and Williamson and Company.

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national prosperity. As an Englishman and an Oxford man, Goldwin Smith is almost incapable of rightly understanding Canadian sentiment. He refuses to understand it, and even if the telescope is thrust into his hand, he can always put it to his blind eye. Before knowing Canada, he made up his mind what Canadian sentiment ought to be, and from that preconception he refuses to be turned aside by any number of dirty facts or by a development that everyone else is able to see. That "the honour or true interest of his native country can for a moment be absent from his breast" no one imagines, but then, this is not his native country. The Scotch may be "here, as everywhere, a thrifty, wise and powerful clan," though why the Scotch should be a clan and the English a nation is what "no fellah can understand," except for the Irish reason that the clan remained the peculiar form of social organization in the Highlands, and therefore did not determine the main current of Scottish national life. But there is an insular limitation of view, popularly known as John Bullism, more obstinate and ineradicable than clan feeling, and nowhere is it so obstinate, so serene and so beautiful as in Oxford. The truthfulness and nobility of character with which it is combined saves it from ridicule, but the limitations are none the less apparent to everyone who has not had the good fortune to be born in England. What has just been said may suggest why the book has been read by us with such mingled feelings. It is, as a literary friend writes to-day, "so brilliant, so inaccurate, so malicious even, that it is enough to make one weep." It is marvellously condensed too, and yet the interest is preserved from first to last. In a small volume we have sketched for us the history of French-Canada, of the various British Provinces and of the Dominion. The writer deals with a long his-

tory, and with the politics, the constitutions, the race and religious questions, and the relations of all the great English speaking lands down to the present day, indicating clearly from the first his own point of view and his convictions as to the future which manifest destiny is preparing for us. A work like this it is extremely difficult to review. Thousands of facts are referred to that could easily be presented in other lights. The ordinary reader is helpless in such a grasp, for, as everyone knows who reads opposite party newspapers, the conclusion depends on the facts that are selected and the way in which they are massed.

It is difficult to account for the mistakes, which we are compelled to take notice of, seeing that the author "has done his best." One reason is that he does not know Canada, except from maps, books and newspapers. Another is his facility of generalizing, and a desire—which he has evidently tried to curb in this volume—to sting opponents to the quick. He has the power of phrase-making and of giving nicknames that are intended to be offensive. When our best constitutional authorities do not agree with him, they are simply "Courtly pundits," or "Constitutional hierophants." When Canadians, either in fun or earnest, do a little tall talk by way of offset to the cataracts of the same kind of rhetoric indulged in by our neighbours, they are taken seriously and called "Canadian Jingoes" or "Paper Tigers." Language even more offensive is freely used, and it does not strike an unbiassed reader as either just or convincing. His very wealth of historical knowledge and fertility of allusion misleads him into seeing resemblances where there is only the faintest analogy. Sometimes his mistakes and selected or half truths cannot be assigned to any of these causes, and they would be unintelligible to those who know that he

desires to see straight, if they did not make allowance for the bias that preconceptions may exert on the highest minds. In his case there is not only the general tendency, to which all are subject, of yielding to a prepossession,—there is, too, an unconscious desire to vindicate former prophecies. Always believing our ultimate destiny to be absorption by the United States and saying so in every variety of way, he even committed himself to a prophecy as distinct as Jonah's with regard to time. More than ten years ago he declared that the life of the Dominion was not worth ten years' purchase. The very imperfect prophet was angry when Nineveh was not destroyed according to his word. Is it wonderful that one, who at any rate is not among the canonical prophets, should be slightly dissatisfied to find Canada not yet destroyed politically, but on the contrary so much stronger that a party is silently growing which believes that she could stand by herself, even though separated from Britain? It is only fair to give instances of those half truths to which I refer, and I shall select some from one section, between pp. 142 and 231. Here is the description which he gives of the action of New Brunswick with regard to Confederation. "The consent of the Legislature of New Brunswick was only obtained by heavy pressure, the Colonial Office assisting, and after strong resistance, an election having taken place in which every one of the delegates had been rejected by the people." When we remember that this narrative is given in connection with the plea that the plan should have been submitted to the people, it is all the more marvellous. The facts are that it was submitted in New Brunswick to the people and defeated; that another general election was held some two years afterwards, when the opponents of Confederation were so completely defeated that there was not the slightest necessity for pres-

sure on the Legislature, light or heavy, from the Colonial Office or anybody else. Again, speaking of the military value of the Intercolonial Railway, he says that "it is for military men to judge," and that at the time when it was projected, "two British officers of artillery pointed out that the line would be fatally liable to snow-blocks," and he then adds: "It would be awkward if at a crisis like that of the Great Mutiny, or that of a Russian invasion in India, the reinforcements were blockaded by snow in the wilderness between Halifax and Quebec." It is really too cruel for him to resurrect the names of those unfortunate British youths, but how shall we characterize the parading of them as authorities, against the notorious fact that the railway has been operated for nearly twenty years, without snow-blocks? On the very next page, speaking of the Canadian Pacific, he says, "The fact is constantly overlooked, in vaunting the importance of this line to the Empire, that its eastern section passes through the State of Maine, and would, of course, be closed to troops in case of war with any power at peace with the United States." This is even more extraordinary, for he must know that the Intercolonial is parallel with this section, and could be used if the slightest difficulty of the kind were raised. Just because we had the Intercolonial a short line across Maine for ordinary purposes was quite permissible. When you can go from one section of your farm to another by a road of your own, you may take advantage of a short cut across one of your neighbour's lots. He is not likely to object, especially if he makes something by it, when he knows that you are not absolutely dependent upon his courtesy. In the same chapter on "The Fruits of Confederation," we are told "Ontario was to be forced to manufacture; she has no coal; yet to reconcile Nova Scotia to the tariff a coal duty was imposed; in vain, for Ontario after all continued to

import her coal from Pennsylvania." But, it was not in vain. The tariff did give Nova Scotia the market of Quebec Province and of the great railways, and a much larger coal business has been built up, in consequence, than we had with the United States during the Reciprocity Treaty. In the same chapter the explanation given of the fact that the Provincial Legislatures are Liberal, while Parliament is Conservative, is "that the Dominion bribery fund is used in Dominion, not in Provincial, elections, and used with the more effect because a great many of the people, especially in the newly annexed Provinces, are comparatively apathetic about the affairs of the Dominion, while they feel a lively interest in their own." This announcement of his comparative apathy during a Dominion election will be news to every Canadian, but none the less it will make some persons in England and the States believe in the general corruption of the Canadian people, while the account given in the same chapter of Mr. Rykert's case will convince them that we are not fit to be trusted with representative institutions. We are told that on the verdict of the House of Commons Committee being given, "thereupon he resigns his seat, appeals to his constituents, pleading that he is no worse than the rest, and is re-elected." The truth is told here, but not the whole truth; only as much of it as conveys totally false impressions. It is not mentioned that unless he had resigned he would have been expelled; that though he had long been a power in his county he was re-elected by about one-fifth of the electorate, and only because party, unscrupulous in Canada as everywhere else, sought to make capital out of his case; that he would not have been allowed to take his seat in Parliament, and that at the election about a year later he did not venture to offer himself as a candidate. True, the last fact was not known

before the publication of the book, but the others were. The case is bad enough, but there is no need to make it worse.

The motive of the whole book is to prove, first, that Confederation was a blunder and that our attempts to build up a northern nation are simply to continue the blunder; secondly, that the political union of Canada with the United States would be for both countries the best thing that could happen to them, and that it would be a good thing for Britain as well. Let us glance at these two fundamental positions.

So decided is he with regard to the first that he again and again points out Canada to Australia as a dreadful example to be shunned. "We cannot help once more warning the Australians that Federation under the elective system involves not merely the union of the several States under a central government with powers superior to them all; but the creation of Federal parties with all the faction, demagogism and corruption which party contests involve over a new field and on a vastly extended scale." But what are the Australians to do? At present the different Colonies are separated by hostile tariffs. They can unite neither for offence nor defence. They must be a nation. What else can they do but Federate under the elective system?

To prove his first position, he appeals to an excellent map, which faces the first page of the book, showing the geographical and economical relations of Canada. The Dominion, he says, is divided into four geographical districts, separated from each other by great barriers of nature, but each commercially united by nature to a district on the south. Admitting that to be the truth, though not the whole truth, surely geography is not the sole or even the primary factor in the formation of nations.

Lord Beaconsfield was laughed at for demanding "a scientific frontier" for India at the expense of the Afghans, but he did not propose to enclose a continent, either Europe or Asia, within "a ring fence" for commercial reasons. The greatest nation in Europe is Germany, and the core of Germany is Prussia; but if we look at the map of Prussia in 1740, we find the kingdom consisting of bits of territory scattered between Russia and the Rhine, separated from each other by intervening hostile States. Even so late as 1858, its territory was very far from being geographically consolidated, as any map of the period will show. Its difficulties were greater than ours, but it overcame them. No one pointed out more clearly than Joseph Howe, the most eloquent advocate of Confederation in his best days, that Canada consists of four great sections, and no one emphasized the obstacles to be overcome by us on that account as forcibly as Lord Lansdowne; but we have only to look at the map to see that the bogey is after all not so very dreadful, and that excessive language about it is unnecessary. "The Maritime Provinces," we read on the first page of "Canada and the Canadian Question," "are divided from Old Canada by the wilderness of many hundred miles through which the Intercolonial Railway runs, hardly taking up a passenger or a bale of freight by the way. Old Canada is divided from Manitoba and the North-West by the great fresh-water sea of Lake Superior and the wide wilderness on either side of it. Manitoba and the North-West again are divided from British Columbia by a triple range of mountains, the Rockies, the Selkirks and the Golden or Coast Range." Every sentence is an exaggeration. As to the first, the fact is that from the fertile lands on each side of the Bay of Chaleur in New Brunswick to the City of Quebec the distance is three hundred miles, and for more than half that distance the

railway runs along the St. Lawrence, through a well-inhabited country. As to the second, we would not part with Lake Superior for millions, and the wide wilderness on either side of it belongs to Ontario, and is considered one of the most valuable assets of the Province. The map tells us truthfully of copper and nickel—the greatest nickel deposits in the world—in the one wilderness, and of iron and silver — gold might be added—in the other. There is also valuable farming land on the banks of the Rainy River. In a word, Ontario touches the prairie. As to the third sentence, every one knows that there is the same triple range of mountains in the States, and that in Canada the passes across them are lower. The Pacific States are as truly united with those on the Mississippi and Missouri as though there were no intervening mountains. With regard to the commercial relations of each section of the Dominion being only with the south, the language is also exaggerated. For example, we are told that the Maritime Provinces must send their lumber, their bituminous coal and their fish to New England. If that is the case, why do all our coal counties insist so emphatically that they do not want reciprocity in coal? The people ought to know something of their own business. They are shrewd, hard-headed and practical men, and it simply amuses them when Mr. Longley says "that the Maritime Provinces have no natural or healthy trade with the Upper Provinces," and when Dr. Goldwin Smith informs them that their best market would be Maine and the other New England States. They had that market for twelve years and found it a good one. But just when a fair business was established their neighbours abolished the Reciprocity Treaty and they were thrown on their backs. What that meant the writer knows from personal knowledge of at least one district. Hundreds of people had to live for

years on bread and water, and to go in debt for the bread. They did not despair, however, but proceeded to build up the inter-provincial business that Confederation made possible. And now when they have secured a larger market than they had with New England, and one that is steadily increasing, they are coolly advised to knock it on the head and take their chances with their former customers, who have in the meantime accommodated themselves and their furnaces to the coal of Pennsylvania!

From first to last of the book there is not a good word for Confederation. Its birth was bad, and ever since the brat has gone on from bad to worse. "Its real parent was Deadlock." No more than the real parent of the German Empire was Sedan or the Siege of Paris. He mistakes the occasion for the parent. He insists that the plan should have been submitted to the people of the different Provinces concerned and their decision ascertained by a plebiscite. But a plebiscite is not known to the British Constitution. Representatives are supposed to represent. In Nova Scotia, the opponents of Confederation asked that it should be submitted at a general election, but the objections to that were stated then pretty much as they are summarized on page 144. "At a general election different issues are mixed together; various questions, local and personal, as well as general, operate on the voter's mind; the legislative questions are confused with the question to whom shall belong the prizes of office; party feeling is aroused; a clear decision cannot be obtained." Certain it is that a plebiscite would never have been given in Scotland for union with England, yet all admit now that the Union was good for both countries. If the plebiscite or the Referendum is a good thing, by all means let us incorporate it in our Constitution; but seeing that it is not incorporated yet, why complain that it

was not used before 1867? And why raise this question now, it may be asked? The compact has been made valid by acquiescence, repeated over and over again by the votes of every Province. If we are to go back twenty-five years, we may go as far back as the Union between England and Scotland, and ask for its dissolution on the ground that it was not consecrated by the Swiss Referendum. The ultimate acquiescence of Mr. Howe in the Confederation Act is shamefully—no other word can be used—misrepresented. "He was gained over by the promise of office, and those who in England had listened to his patriot thunders and had moved in response to his appeal, heard with surprise that the orator had taken his seat in a Federationist administration." Poor Howe! It is too bad. It matters little whether people in England were surprised or not. Every true Canadian knows that Howe never did a more patriotic and self-sacrificing act than when he laid down his arms and consented—at the risk of his political life—to take a seat in the Cabinet. He had fought the Quebec Act in Nova Scotia, in Ottawa and in England in 1866 and 1868, with astonishing power, but he was beaten. The Imperial Parliament would not listen to him. And he knew that he was beaten. He considered every alternative, even that of resistance. At a word from him the Province would have risen. For not giving the word, Nova Scotia can never be too grateful to him. What then was he to do? To sulk and let the Province suffer? To make it as unhappy as Ireland, so far as he could, or to make the best of matters? The latter was the only course left to a Statesman. He did obtain improved financial terms, but no Premier would have undertaken to submit these to the House of Commons and stake the existence of his Government on the proposals, unless there was some assurance that they would be

accepted by Nova Scotia. Howe had to give the assurance in a constitutional way. He had to become a party to the pact by entering the Cabinet and submitting himself to the judgment of his constituents. He did so, gained his election for Hants, shattering his health in the contest, and now, because he stood in the breach at the cost of his life, it is glibly explained that "he was gained over by the promise of office."

A Confederation that began so badly and that is "united by no natural bond of geography, race, language or commercial interest" cannot be expected to do well. That it has done very badly, always and in all things, the author is never wearied of asserting. Proof after proof is given that from its birth it has been going to the dogs. He, however, proves far too much, and in consequence even where he hits an acknowledged blot, or where a genuine wolf does appear, his cries are unheeded. Every nation, like every individual, has to pay its school fees, and these are sometimes heavy. It by no means follows that the education is therefore bad. The nation, like the individual, must hew out a path for itself, resist temptations and overcome enemies, before it can realize its highest self. The rougher the waves the more rejoicingly does the strong swimmer beat them aside, or float over them withersoever he will. In this struggle towards self-realization, wise counsellors can do much for a young nation. We need prophets as well as princes; men to point out the hidden rocks and dangerous currents and to tell us how best to steer between Scylla and Charybdis. Such a prophet Goldwin Smith could have been to us, but some fatal defect has hindered him. For the good he has done we are grateful, but he ought to know that cursing at large is of very little use. That in this book he proves far too much, an honest attempt to answer the single question,—What else could we have done? will be sufficient to show.

There have been several turning points in Canadian history since Arnold and Montgomery were beaten back from the walls of Quebec, and one would like to have a Professor of History review these and tell us calmly what else could have been done than was done by Canada on each of those occasions. At the close of the Revolutionary War, should Canada have been surrendered to the States? That, he sees, would have been infamous. He points out that the responsibility for the war was quite as much on one side as on the other. There was a group of Boston Republicans who were determined from the first to bring about separation, and their influence was all-powerful. Some of the reasons given for the war by the Colonies, such as the toleration extended by the Mother Country to the Roman Catholics of Quebec, and her insistence that the Indians' prior claim to their own land should be acknowledged, are to the eternal glory of Britain. "England, at all events, was bound in honour to protect the refugees in their new home." The next crisis in our history was the War of 1812. It was a war of one against twenty or thirty, but what else could our fathers do but repel "unprincipled aggression"? "The best part of the American people opposed the war," but that did not make it any the less grievous for the Canadians who were killed, maimed, or ruined, in defending their country from invasion. Again, when in 1837, the struggle for responsible government in Canada broke out into petty rebellions, what else could any Government do but put these down?" The irritating filibustering war kept up along our border at that time by American sympathizers is described as one of "many blind efforts of the New World to shake off European interference." Blind indeed, for the next sentence points out "that in Upper Canada there was not a single British bayonet

when the rebellion was put down." The only interference in the case came, not from Europe, but from the worst elements in the United States which at the time controlled the country. It was the story of the wolf and the lamb over again, and the attitude of the aggressive lamb could not be tolerated by any high-minded wolf. Again, when in 1846, Britain cut the commercial tie between herself and Canada, and as consequences, "property in the towns fell fifty per cent. in value," and "three-fourths of the commercial men were bankrupt," what should Canada have done? Sued for admission to the United States? Had we taken this course and entered the Union then, it would doubtless have been to our immediate gain. "Many leading merchants," and others of the same kind, so counselled, but the people were made of nobler stuff. Who that knows the meaning of life and has looked into the secret fountains of national greatness will deny that they chose aright? In 1854 Lord Elgin obtained a Reciprocity Treaty and that benefited us for twelve years, though not to anything like the extent generally supposed. Most of the benefit would have accrued to us in any case, and it is demonstrable that the States were benefited even more than Canada. The treaty was ended, it seems, because our neighbours were irritated at the criticisms of part of the British and Canadian press during the war. They forgot that when the Emperor Napoleon urged that the South should be recognized, it was Britain that refused, and they forgot that forty thousand Canadians had fought for the Union. But, again we ask, what else could the British Provinces have done in the circumstances but confederate and try to build up an inter-provincial and foreign trade. If the *habitans* had been able to speak English, if Maine had not been shoved up so far north, if "north-west angle" of Lake of the Woods had read south-

west in the treaty, and if a number of other things had only been otherwise, our task would have been easier, but only children cry over spilled milk. We had to cut out our coat according to the cloth that we had. And, that we have not failed, so far as money-making is concerned, Mr. Darling's article in Appendix A is sufficient to prove. The deposits in the building societies and loan companies have increased from $577,299 in 1867, to $17,757,376 in 1889. In the chartered banks the total amount at the credit of depositors was $30,652,193 in 1867; in 1889 it was $126,243,755. The balances at the credit of depositors in the Government Savings Banks and Post Office have risen from a trifle to $43,000,000. This astonishing development is called "commercial atrophy." Moderate men would hardly dream of hoping for anything better than a continuance of the atrophy. Other evidences of our material progress could easily be given.

Confederation, of course, like every political organization that has yet been invented, has its defects; but these surely can be remedied by a free people. It is not wholly a bad thing that reforms should be called for. The growth of ideas is continually suggesting something to reform. No doubt, too, Confederation has cost us something. Everything of value does cost. As yet, it has not cost us one-tenth or one-hundredth part of the money or the blood that our neighbours have paid to gain and complete their union. It is pure perversity to say that "The fruits of Canadian industry are being lavished by scores of millions on political railways and other works, the object of which is to keep Canada forever separated from her neighbour." The Intercolonial Railway, the Canadian Pacific and the "Soo" canal had to be constructed when we decided to be a nation. Bitter experience and downright humiliation taught us that each of those works was neces-

sary, and consequently the money for their construction was voted by the people without a murmur. Besides, these works do not separate the countries. Our neighbours make some use of our canals, and a very extensive use indeed of the Grand Trunk and Canadian Pacific. During their war the Grand Trunk was invaluable to them. So is the Canadian Pacific now.

Here, then, is the question to which we would respectfully press for an answer: What else could Canada have done at any of the previous crises in its history, and what else could it have done in 1867? At every stage in our development we were shut up to one course. It is in events that we must look for the will of God. *Laus Deo!* He will guide us to the end.

And when we contrast the condition of things in Canada half a century ago with the present, we may well take courage. Lord Durham, in his report, alludes "to the striking contrast which is presented between the American and the British sides of the frontier line in respect to every sign of productive industry, increasing wealth and progressive civilization." Major Head, the commissioner appointed by him to visit the Lower Provinces, gave a melancholy report of their poverty, backwardness and stagnation. In his journey through Nova Scotia he saw "half the tenements abandoned and lands everywhere falling into decay." How different the spectacle now, from Victoria and Vancouver on the Pacific to St. John, Halifax and Sydney on the Atlantic! Depression exists in some districts, but it can be said with truth that there are not in the world five millions of human beings better fed and better clad, or more peaceful, prosperous, intelligent and God-fearing than the five millions who call Canada their home, and who would fight to the death for the welfare, the unity, or the honour of their home. Confederation

has not brought the millenium. It may be doubted whether any political arrangement or rearrangement will do that; but, at any rate, Confederation has not been a failure.

The main position of the book is that the political unification of the continent would be to the advantage of Canada, of the United States, and of Great Britain. With the great importance of such unification the distinguished author was deeply impressed long ago, and with this, as with others of his opinions, it would seem to be the case that

> Time but the impression stronger makes,
> As streams their channels deeper wear.

To this everything else in his book is subsidiary, including the attempts to prove, by appeals to geography, economics and history, as well as to the etiquette maintained at Rideau Hall, that Confederation was a mistake. He believes that the great "primary" forces will in the end triumph over the "secondary" ones, which he admits are at present standing in the way of his great ideal. He pleads, therefore, for the right to discuss the question without subjecting himself to the charge of treason. "There must have been talk of the Union between England and Scotland before it took place, and there has been talk of a union of Portugal with Spain; but so long as all was open and without prejudice to national duty on either side there could be no treason," (p. 238). This argument or plea must be admitted. It is precisely what Irish Home-rulers say to opponents who charge them with treason. "If the Crown and Parliament of Great Britain sanction a change, the treason thenceforth will be in resistance." Whether all the steps, so far as Canada is concerned, that have been taken hitherto, have been "open and without prejudice to national duty" may—in

the light that has recently been let in upon them—be questioned. It may even be questioned whether it is "without prejudice to national duty" to agitate for commercial arrangements with a foreign country, with the avowed expectation of having them vetoed by the Crown, with the result of inflaming the Canadian mind and bringing about another Boston tea-party and the disruption of the British Empire of which we form a part. On this point Mr. Blake's position is the more candid, as well as the nobler, from every point of view. In his letter to his late constituency, he says :—

"Whatever you or I may think on that head ; whether we like or dislike, believe or disbelieve in Political Union ; must we not agree that the subject is one of great moment, towards the practical settlement of which we should take no serious step without reflection, or in ignorance of what we are doing ?

"Assuming that absolute free trade with the States, best described as Commercial Union, may and ought to come, I believe that it can and should come only as an incident, or at any rate as a well understood precursor of Political Union ; for which indeed we should be able to make better terms before than after the surrender of our Commercial Independence.

"Then so believing—believing that the decision of the Trade question involves that of the Constitutional issue, for which you are unprepared, and with which you do not even conceive yourselves to be dealing—how can I properly recommend you now to decide on Commercial Union ?"

This is the language of a man who sees straight, and who will not consent to befog or delude the people, even for what he might be tempted to call their own advantage. But when a man has set his heart on political union with the States, and sees clearly all the difficulties that are in the

way, and at the same time firmly believes that Commercial Union would be advantageous, it is no wonder that he is tempted to persuade the people to take the easy step first. Though the one should involve the other he is not alarmed, because he is convinced that the other would be also advantageous. Of that he is cock-sure, and it is something to be as cock-sure of one thing "as Macaulay was of everything," according to Lord Melbourne. It may be as well to say here that the present writer is one of those who can agree neither with the extreme partisans who hold that Canada cannot live, or at any rate "live well," without free trade with the States, nor with the extreme men on the opposite side who have persuaded themselves that free trade with neighbours would be injurious. Both extremes are contradicted by the facts. At the same time, he acknowledges that he is more in sympathy with the men who hold the second position, absurd though it seems, because, if the first position were true, it must be abundantly manifest that it is not in our power to force the United States to give us what Mr. Blaine characteristically calls "the cash value" of their markets, and also that the more we clamour for that cash value, like sturdy beggars instead of self-respecting traders, the more unlikely are we to get it and the more do we enfeeble and disgrace ourselves. The present book, in its perpetual insistence on the material prosperity that union would bring, appeals far too much to the baser side of human nature. Surely the lessons that history teaches are that wealth is not the one thing indispensable to a people; that commercial prosperity may be bought at too great a price; that if wealth be gained at the cost of the slightest loss of moral power, it proves not a blessing but a curse that can never be shaken off; and that simplicity of life is not inconsistent with the highest culture any more than with the formation of the

noblest character. All this no one would admit more readily than Dr. Goldwin Smith, and he would answer that in his opinion there would be no loss of moral power to Canada in consenting to a union with the States. He must admit, however, that that would depend on the paramount motives that determined the country to such a decision, and that appeals to cupidity or to fear are alike unworthy of a great writer and insulting to a great people.

In discussing this question which has been now brought before us so distinctly, it is indispensable to face all that is actually involved, and—as a great authority in morals advised—to "clear our minds of cant." Because a man is true to his own country, government and institutions, his own history and his own flag, in one word because he is loyal, it is surely cant, or affectation of freedom from cant, to assume that he is, therefore, an enemy to the people of the United States. Anything more preposterous could not be put in words, and yet that is what is constantly assumed by certain writers. It is also something like cant to say that "there is no reason why the union of the two sections of the English-speaking people on this Continent should not be as free, as equal, and as honourable as the union of England and Scotland," or to speak of "a union of Canada with the American Commonwealth like that into which Scotland entered with England," (pp. 267, 8). Such a union is not on the carpet and is totally out of the question. There is no analogy between the two cases. Scotland in consenting to the union forfeited nothing historical or sentimental and therefore no moral force, whereas Canada would forfeit everything. In the one case, there was no disruption from an Empire to which Scotland belonged and therefore no change of citizenship. Scotland remained a distinct realm and has ever since been legislated for distinctly. The two crowns had been on

one head ever since she had given her King to England. Her St. Andrew's cross was blended with the cross of St. George. She retained her Presbyterian establishment and every succeeding monarch has to swear to preserve the Scottish Church. While she gave up her separate parliament she did not give up the parliamentary system. How different all these things would be in the case of Canada! It is a delusion to fancy that the great Republic could receive us save as a number of separate states, or to fancy that it would accept our monarchical, judicial, or parliamentary system, our name, our flag or our citizenship. Any party in the United States that advocated a change in the Constitution, in order to gain Canada, would be beaten by the opposite party. Not only do the politicians know that right well, but also men who, like the author, understand something of the feelings of the American people. "There is," he says, "the comparative indifference of the Southern States of the Union to an acquisition in the North. There is, moreover, a want of diplomatic power to negotiate a union. . . . . If negotiations for a union were set on foot, the party out of power would of course do its best to make them miscarry, and a patriotic press would not fail to lend its aid. Every sort of susceptibility and jealousy on such occasions is wide awake," (p. 280). The democracy of the United States is too thoroughly convinced of its own superiority to the rest of the world and too sure that Canada must, in due season, fall into its mouth like a ripe plum to listen to any Treaty of Union such as that to which Scotland and England agreed. Every letter or leading article on this side of the line in favour of union deepens these natural convictions or delusions of the democracy of the States, and it may therefore be said that the Canadian advocates of Continental Union are its most scientific opponents. Three

things we would be called upon to sacrifice at the outset. In the first place, our citizenship. Ceasing to be British, we would become citizens of an alien, possibly a hostile, nation. The adjectives are not ours. The first is borrowed from an article by a Bystander, in the *Canadian Monthly*, July, 1872, in which the following sentence occurs: "The identity of language veils the fact that the people of the United States have become, under the influence of different institutions, and from the infusion of foreign elements, at least as alien to the British as any other foreign nation." The second is from the highest political authority in Ontario. Is it wonderful that the very suggestion of a sacrifice unparalleled in history should crimson the faces of people who do not pretend to be fishy-blooded? This implies no disparagement, on our part, of the American people. On the contrary, we heartily subscribe to what is said with regard to community of citizenship, in the section on Imperial Federation. "There is no apparent reason why, among all the states of our race, there should not be community of citizenship, so that a citizen of any one of the nations might take up the rights of a citizen in any one of the others at once upon his change of domicile, and without the process of naturalization. This would be political unity of no inconsiderable kind without diplomatic liabilities, or the strain, which surely no one can think free from peril, of political centralization," (p 266). The objections to such a proposal would not come from Britain, Canada or Australia. Even as it is, there is nothing offensive in the British oath of allegiance. The throwing away by us of our British citizenship would however be a strange introduction to this proposed bringing in of a wider franchise. In the second place, we would have to sacrifice our country. To be a Canadian now is to be something more than a Nova Scotian or an Ontarian.

It is simply not true that "no inhabitant of Nova Scotia or New Brunswick calls himself a Canadian," (p. 213). To-day there came to hand, as if on purpose to supply an emphatic answer to the allegation, the Dalhousie College *Gazette* for April, the journal published by the students of the principal university in Nova Scotia. Here is a sample of the anti-Canadian sentiment which is attributed to the Maritime Provinces. In an article which might be headed, like a well-known essay of Mr. Lowell's, "On a Certain Condescension in Foreigners," and specially directed against the insolence of some American editors, the writer remarks: "The American editor thinks no doubt that Canadian veins run ice-water instead of blood . . . He is mistaken . . . After all, the poor editor is to be pitied . . . The Irish vote, the 'boss,' and the labour organization do not permit him to say positively that his soul is his own. We Canadians do not know this, unless we have lived across the lines . . . For Canadians, for students, who are by nature lovers of ideals, what nobler dream can there be than a country of our own? One Canada, from the mountains to the sea, from the prairies to the great lakes—Quebec, our Wales—a people sprung from the sifted yeomanry of England, Scotland and Ireland, a country where pure laws are sternly administered, where education is evenly diffused throughout all ranks and classes, where religion beats in the national life-blood—is not this possibility grand enough to live and die for? We are an English people . . . We cannot degenerate. This stern climate breeds only a hardy race; its rigours forever preclude the possibility of less sturdy generations. It is only with great thoughts that we can build a great nation."

So the article runs, and after reading it I ask myself, what am I to think of Dr. Goldwin Smith's confident

declaration that "no inhabitant of Nova Scotia calls himself a Canadian?" Yes, "we Canadians," to use the phrase of young Nova Scotia, set out in 1867 to make a country, and to make it on British lines because we were all British to begin with. In our inspiring work of nation-building, mistakes no doubt have been committed. Where is the man, outside of the editorial sanctum, who has never blundered? Where the nation that has never been led astray? But we have always felt that the country would survive in spite of the mistakes into which politicians might drift. In 1867, anti-confederates pointed out that the proposed Dominion consisted of four divisions that could not be united together by railways and each of which was intended by nature to be a mere appendage to a corresponding State or section to the South. There was a measure of truth in this. But the people would not listen. Instinctively they understood that every nation must be ready to pay a price, must be willing to transcend difficulties in order to realize itself, to maintain its independence, to secure for itself a distinctive future. They said, let us rise up and build. So, they added to their unequalled system of internal navigation from the Straits of Belleisle up into the centre of the continent, an unparalleled railway system along lines where engineers and scientific men had declared that railways could not be built. And now, when the difficulties have been overcome, when every part of our confederacy is linked together by bands of the best steel, when magnificent dry docks have been built at Halifax and Vancouver, when our coasts and rivers and lakes have been lighted with hundreds of lighthouses: now, when—after incredible toil and expense and faith on the part of, comparatively speaking, a handful of people scattered over half a continent—we have succeeded in

building our nation's house, it is coolly proposed that we should break it into fragments as if it were a card castle and as if the putting of it together had been merely a bit of child's play on the part of grown babies! How can anyone fancy that such a thing is possible! In the third place, we would have to sacrifice our Constitution. It is true that Canada is described as "A Federal Republic after the American model, though with certain modifications derived partly from the British source," (p. 157). The description would mislead if we did not study the following thirty pages, where the fact that our Constitution is essentially different from the American is indicated, point after point. It is Parliamentary, after the British model which has been imitated by every other free country, whereas "The framers of the American Constitution were full of Montesquieu's false notion about the necessity of entirely separating the executive from the legislative." A sovereign authority above the Provinces gave them certain powers, whereas the framers of the American Constitution were forced to content themselves with such powers for the Central Government as a number of Sovereign States were willing to concede. It would take too long to go over the points of difference, one by one, and to show the superiority of our system in every particular, save in the matter of subsidies to the Provinces. Neither is it necessary, for the point at present insisted on is that every nation must make or rather work out its own Constitution in the course of its history. Its Constitution is not a coat to be thrown aside for a neighbour's, but the very body which the inner life has gathered round it from the past and the present. This outward form can be slowly changed by development to meet the changing environment and the growth of ideas, but it cannot be exchanged for another by revolution without grievous—perhaps irreparable—hurt to the nation's life.

This bare enumeration of what Canada would have to surrender in order to unite with the Republic is sufficient to make us wonder that anyone could fancy such a thing to be within the bounds of possibility. What counterbalancing gains are mentioned? First, commercial development. This is the one strong point that is made. That "the near market must, as a rule, be the best," seems to most men plain as daylight. But that a nation should sell itself for this is inconceivable. The author points out "that Canadian society in general is sound, and that power in regard to the ordinary concerns of life is in the hands, not of politicians, but of the chiefs of commerce and industry, of judges and lawyers, of the clergy, and of the leaders of public opinion." Such a community is not likely to be destitute of self-respect. Those chiefs, too, are not like the politicians, who are declared to be afraid to speak. Nine-tenths of them would be in favour of the freest interchange with their neighbours on honourable terms; but, is there a chief of any of the classes named who has expressed himself as willing to go farther? "Security for peace and immunity from war taxation" is also counted a gain, but for various reasons that need not be pressed. It can hardly be said to be true, while the United States pension fund keeps growing at its present luxuriant rate. Another gain that appeals to Christian sentiment is mentioned. "Those who scan the future without prejudice must see that the political fortunes of the Continent are embarked in the great Republic, and that Canada will best promote her own ultimate interests by contributing without unnecessary delay all that she has in the way of political character and force towards the saving of the main chance and the fulfilment of the common hope. The native American element, in which the tradition of self-government resides, is hard pressed by the

foreign element untrained to self-government, and stands in need of the reinforcement which the entrance of Canada into the Union would bring it." There is something in this, and I wish to admit it frankly and to acknowledge the force with which it is put. It gives no pleasure to any sane man to hear of a threatened war of races in the South, or of anarchism in Chicago, or of any other evil force threatening American civilization. But, it is clear that no moral contribution which we could bring to the Republic would ever amount to anything if we commenced by being false to ourselves or to that Empire, which is the great power representing liberty, peace, righteousness and commercial freedom to all lands; still less, if it could be said that we were prompted to union by the hope of securing the "cash value" of the Republic's markets or by a political cowardice and indolence that sought to escape the trouble of settling our own internal difficulties. It is hardly needed to ask what the United States would gain by union, for they profess to need nothing that we could supply. It seems, however, that we could serve the Mother Country by performing the "happy-despatch." "Admitted into the councils of their own Continent, and exercising their fair share of influence there, Canadians would render the Mother Country the best of all services, and the only service in their power, by neutralizing the votes of her enemies. Unprovoked hostility on the part of the American Republic to Great Britain would then become impossible. It is now unlikely, but not impossible, since there is no wickedness which may not possibly be committed by demagogism pandering to Irish hatred," (p. 269). In other words, "demagogism pandering to Irish hatred" would be appeased by being fed. As well try to appease a tiger by giving it blood. Canadians would divide between the two great parties, and there would still

be demagogism and the solid vote. It would exult that it had driven the British flag from this Continent. That would whet it for further triumphs, as we would find when too late. "The moral federation of the whole English-speaking race throughout the world" is the vision that inspires those who plead for closer union with the Mother Country as against separation, but they are profoundly convinced that the steps to it must be taken along the lines of their own historical development. British statesmen have also probably learnt—at least the author of "Canada and the Canadian Question" once hoped that they had learnt—"the vanity of attempting by unreciprocated demonstrations of good will and caresses which are invariably misconstrued to gain the friendship of the one nation on earth whose friendship is not to be gained." This is much stronger language than I would care to use, but I am none the less convinced that the best way to gain the friendship of the United States—and we all wish to gain it—is by preserving our own self-respect and maintaining our own rights. At any rate, disunion is not a good step to take on the way to union, and concession is a better policy in dealing with weakness than in dealing with hate. It is amusing to note, too, how the losses that would result to Britain from the proposed union are discounted. Instead of the ports of Halifax and Victoria, with the actual coal mines of Nova Scotia and Vancouver Island, the possible coal of Newfoundland is suggested as a substitute; the Canadian Pacific Railway is represented as of no Imperial benefit, though by means of it forces could be sent to Yokohama or Shanghai in twenty to twenty-five days, whereas by the Suez Canal—which would be blocked when most needed—they would take forty days; and Canada is made out to be as valuable commercially to Britain under the McKinley Bill as under her present tariff!

Dr. Goldwin Smith once said that "few have fought against geography and prevailed." Man triumphs continually over geography or nature in any form. Every trans-continental railway is such a triumph. The unity of the Swiss, the union of the Highlands and Lowlands, of Celts and Saxons in what I will call—*pace* Dr. Goldwin Smith—the Scottish nation, are other examples. Would it not be more to the purpose to ask, how few have fought against human nature, especially against its best elements, and prevailed? But while his fixed longing is for the political unification of the continent, he suggests in this book an alternative, either because the vision of "the lost cause" of Canadian nationality still flits before his imagination or because the difficulties in the way of the larger scheme are felt to be, in the meantime, insuperable. Here is the alternative: "There is no reason why Ontario should not be a nation if she were minded to be one. Her territory is compact, her population is already as large as that of Denmark, and likely to be a good deal larger, probably as large as that of Switzerland; and it is sufficiently homogeneous if she can only repress French encroachment on her Eastern border. . . . The same thing might have been said with regard to the Maritime Provinces—supposing them to have formed a Legislative Union—Quebec, British Columbia, or the North-West. In the North-West, rating its cultivable area at the lowest, there would be room for no mean nation. But the thread of each Province's destiny has now become so intertwined with the rest that the skein can hardly be disentangled," (p. 256). It is really difficult to know what this means. Ontario might still be a nation and the other Provinces might have been! Language of this kind can hardly be taken seriously. It is implied too that the "Canada First" men had no higher conception, yet

the dates given show the contrary. It was the Confederation of 1867 which inspired that movement in 1871. Confederation widened the horizon and fired the hearts of our young men. By giving a frontage on the Atlantic and promising another on the Pacific, as well as securing that illimitable North-West to which they had been long looking with hope, the best blood in Ontario was stirred. Canada was to be something more than a mere inland Province. And in every other Province it inspired similar feelings of patriotism and hope. That movement died, just as a corn of wheat dies, to bring forth much fruit. It represented an idea which is no longer confined to a circle or a few societies, but which is in the air that every Canadian breathes and which has become inwrought into our spiritual nerve and fibre. To tell us that Ontario could be a nation by itself, and so on, is simply bewildering or ludicrous. Quebec Nationalists dream of a French Roman Catholic nation on the banks of the St. Lawrence in some halcyon future, but busy men need not bother their heads over the dream of the Abbé Gingras any more than over Lord Belhaven's. Practical politicians like Mr. Mercier do not really disturb themselves about such delusions. We are going forward to the twentieth and not back to the tenth century. At the same time there is a foundation, though it is only of straw, that a match would suffice to destroy, for the imposing castle in Spain that a few fond ecclesiastics of the mediæval type construct for their own delectation; but there is not, and never was, even a cobweb on which to build the nations of Acadia, Ontario, Manitoba and British Columbia. The very mention of such an alternative throws an air of unreality about the whole book.

The average Canadian is now prepared to ask, and perhaps with a little amazement, what hinders us from pro-

ceeding along our old lines? The answer of the author will probably be the one word "Quebec." Great is geography but greater far the Jesuit. Canada's disease was bad enough before but now there is no hope. How absolute his despair and how superficial his insight may be judged when he tells us that "Sir Francis Bond Head saw in this case what Lord Durham and Charles Buller did not see," (p. 124). Saul among the prophets is nothing to this! The particular case he refers to was that reunion of Upper and Lower Canada which Lord Durham decided to be the only measure adequate to the necessities of the time. He felt that Canada could have no future, unless its national character was that of the British Empire and of the majority of the population of British America, and that the first step to be taken was reunion. He looked forward to Confederation, but in his day that was impossible and therefore he wisely did what he could. It seems, however, that Sir Francis Bond Head was the real prophet of the time, for he declared in substance with regard to the measure that "The British were sure to be split into factions and their factions were sure to deliver them into the hands of the French." What was the "more sensible" proposal of the prophetic Sir Francis? To annex Montreal to Upper Canada, "though it would have left the British of Quebec city and the Eastern townships out in the cold," and though it would also have permanently irritated and alienated all the rest of Quebec Province and given to the Upper Province a section that would have been a thorn in its side as long as the arrangement lasted. We prefer the folly of Lord Durham and Charles Buller. Of course various kinds of constitutional difficulties followed the reunion, but to claim that the French "became politically dominant" is to misread history. On the great

questions, such as the secularization of the clergy reserves, the abolition of the Seignorial Tenure, Representation by Population, and Confederation, modern ideas and tendencies prevailed. Fusion did not take place, but there may be complete political assimilation without fusion of race or language. Wales was incorporated with England by Edward the First and is English for practical purposes, but is there complete fusion yet? Alsace and Lorraine are French in heart but they speak German. So, Quebec is British politically, though it will speak French for centuries, and on occasions its vote will be as solid as that of Wales, Scotland or Ireland in the British Parliament. Let us have patience and remember that the development of a nation is not to be measured by the short span of human life. Last century, all Canada was French. Now, it includes seven Provinces, six of them English-speaking. In half a century the number of Provinces will probably be doubled and Quebec alone will be French. Already its wisest leaders see that unless their countrymen learn English they must be handicapped for life. Before very long most of the emigration from the northern countries of Europe will be obliged to flow into our North-West, and then into the vacant spaces of the Maritime Provinces neglected now in the eagerness to homestead and preëmpt prairie land. The whole of that immigration will be English-speaking after the first generation. Is not this future as certain as the rising of to-morrow's sun? Will it not be as vain for the Jesuit to fight against it as it was for Canute to bid the tide cease to rise? Yet our author is in despair. We cannot assimilate Quebec and under the joint direction of the Jesuits and Mr. Mercier priestly pretensions and nationalist aspirations will have full swing. Suppose they have, what can they do? We are told that "war is declared against religious liberty, progress and the

organic principles of modern civilization. On such a course the ship of the French Church of Quebec is now steering, with the Jesuit at the helm. If she holds on, a collision can hardly fail to ensue," (p. 17). There is a collision when a bull charges a steam engine, but, as George Stephenson said, "it is verra bad for the coo." Every triumph of the Jesuits costs the Church dear. Well may their wisest leaders say, another such victory as the Estates Bill and we are undone. It is a mistake to suppose that Quebec is politically solid, or that there is no movement of thought among its people. Only in our day has education been at all generally extended to them. The results are already marked and would be still more so, were it not that the aggressive proselytism of Protestant denominations tends to alarm national susceptibilities, to repress internal movements and to throw the people back into the arms of the Church. Naturally and rightly French Canadians have a sentimental attachment to France, but politically they are British and their hearts are all for Canada. When they vote solid it will not be to disgrace their native land or to strike a blow at Britain. There can be no insuperable difficulty in coöperating with a race that has produced in our day men like Cartier, Dorion, Joly, Masson, Taschereau, Frechette, the Casgrains and others like minded who are still in the political arena.

We differ radically, then, from Dr. Goldwin Smith in the main positions of this book. Having cast the horoscope of Canada with the fixed preconception that Confederation must be smashed, he is dissatisfied with everything that makes for its permanence. The great and the little are seen alike from this one point of view, and his judgments are accordingly one-sided and harsh. As an illustration of the great, take his description of the vote on the Jesuits' Estates Bill: "Only 13 members

out of a total of 215 in the Dominion House dared to uphold the national character of Confederation, British ascendancy, the rights of the Civil Power, and the separation of the Church from the State," (p. 219). The 202 included men like Alexander Mackenzie, Edward Blake, Professor Weldon, Sir Donald A. Smith, and others, who "dared," and would dare any day, to do what they thought right, under greater temptations than those which some of the 13 resisted. As an illustration of the little, take his description of the etiquette observed on our great State occasion: "At the opening of the Dominion Parliament by the Governor-General there is a parade of his bodyguard, cannon are fired, everybody puts on all the finery to which he is entitled, the knights don their insignia, the Privy Councillors their Windsor uniform, and the ladies appear in low dresses," (p. 148). Well, we suppose Canada is as much entitled as any other nation to make use of a few ceremonies on high occasions. That is nothing but a part of our present social civilization. It is not necessary that the Governor-General should open Parliament with his pants tucked into his boots, or that he should order out a barrel of whiskey for the entertainment of the assembled crowd, any more than that the President of the States should receive his guests at dinner in a cowboy's shirt. The sensible reason given, in a previous part of the book, in defence of the English practice adopted by Canadian Judges of wearing gowns, applies to this case with even greater force: "The American or Canadian citizen does not need to be impressed so much as the British peasant; but everybody needs to be impressed, and the Canadian custom is the better," (p. 41). Language used frequently at other times shows the author's sympathy with Carlyle's reference to the "many traditions and mementos of priceless things which America has cast

away," and his conviction that we cannot afford to discard anything that tends to surround with dignity the symbol of Sovereignty or the highest expression of the nation's life.

This review has been written reluctantly. It is no pleasure to criticize a man whom we admire. But in the interest of the country it is necessary to point out that he has erred grievously. He could do such grand work for Canada, if he would only lead us in reforming what should be reformed, one step at a time, instead of insisting that the whole house must be pulled down about our ears. Would it not be wiser to join hands to make the Canada of to-day more united and more worthy of the love of her sons and the respect of her neighbours? This book, though the first part is generally excellent and the whole the work of a man of genius, will do no good. It will hurt Canada abroad, and give encouragement and impulse to evil forces at home. Yet, we would not part with the author without again calling to mind what he has done for us, in former days, and expressing the hope that he may live long enough to laugh at his own forebodings and prophecies, and to write another book that shall make amends for "Canada and the Canadian Question."